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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

May 10, 2004

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JUN 14 2004

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

The Hon. Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to express my concerns about portions of the reported Federal Communications Commission plan to address interference in the 800 MHz band. While I share the goals of all parties to quickly address the public safety communications interference problem, the solution must also be sound public policy and protect the American taxpayers.

Specifically, I am concerned about the method in which law enforcement and first responders are compensated for any new technologies that they must purchase as a result of the proposed plan. While the need to alleviate interference is time-sensitive, so is the need to ensure that law enforcement and first responders are not harnessed with the responsibility of funding this transition.

Law enforcement and first responders have critical missions and need every resource at their disposal. They must work efficiently to be effective in their communities. Thus, any plan that requires these first responders to devote resources to changing their technologies must be sure to compensate these agencies fully. A major association representing the law enforcement community has expressed concerns that the proposed plan does not adequately compensate law enforcement for the costs they will be forced to incur as a result of the plan.

Please detail the procedures under the proposed plan that would ensure that law enforcement and first responders are guaranteed full compensation for the expenditures they must make to comply with the plan. Are there sufficient funds reserved such that law enforcement can make all necessary purchases at one time without expending their own financial resources? Does the proposed plan contain provisions that would allow law enforcement and first responders to receive compensation quickly for unanticipated expenditures they must pay after the initial purchase to comply with the plan?

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I intend to work with you to resolve the public safety interference problems in a manner that poses the least short and long-term disruption to public safety communications.

Sincerely,

Bob Goodlatte
Member of Congress

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